

EXHIBIT 2

Read the full transcript of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's resignation speech.

Mr. Cuomo addressed New Yorkers on Tuesday, a week after an investigation found he sexually assaulted 11 women.

Aug. 10, 2021

The following is a transcript of Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo's remarks on Tuesday in which he announced his plans to resign.

Good morning. Let me begin by thanking Rita Glavin for that powerful presentation. I'd like to address several issues today. First, I've always started by telling New Yorkers the facts before my opinion. So let's start New York tough with the truth.

The attorney general did a report on complaints made against me by certain women for my conduct. The report said I sexually harassed 11 women. That was the headline people heard and saw and reacted to. The reaction was outrage. It should have been. However, it was also false. My lawyers, as you just heard from Rita Glavin, have reviewed the report over the past several days and have already raised serious issues and flaws that should concern all New Yorkers because when there is a bias or a lack of fairness in the justice system, it is a concern for everyone, not just those immediately affected.

The most serious allegations made against me had no credible factual basis in the report. And there is a difference between alleged improper conduct and concluding sexual harassment. Now, don't get me wrong, this is not to say that there are not 11 women who I truly offended. There are. And for that I deeply, deeply apologize.

I thought a hug and putting my arm around a staff person while taking a picture was friendly, but she found it to be too forward. I kissed a woman on the cheek at a wedding and I thought I was being nice, but she felt that it was too aggressive. I have slipped and called people honey, sweetheart and darling. I meant it to be endearing, but women found it dated and offensive. I said on national TV to a doctor wearing PPE and giving me a Covid nasal swab, "You make that gown look good." I was joking, obviously, otherwise I wouldn't have said it on national TV. But she found it disrespectful. I take full responsibility for my actions.

I have been too familiar with people. My sense of humor can be insensitive and off-putting. I do hug and kiss people casually, women and men. I have done it all my life. It's who I've been since I can remember. In my mind, I've never crossed the line with anyone, but I didn't realize the extent to which the line has been redrawn. There are generational and cultural shifts that I just didn't fully appreciate, and I should have. No excuses.

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The report did bring to light a matter that I was not aware of and that I would like to address. A female trooper relayed a concern that she found disturbing, and so do I. Please let me provide some context. The governor's trooper detail had about 65 troopers on it, but of the 65 only six women and nine Black troopers. I'm very proud of the diversity of my administration. It's more diverse than any administration in history. And I'm very proud of the fact that I have more women in senior positions than any governor before me.

The lack of diversity on the state police detail was an ongoing disappointment for me. In many ways, the governor's detail is the face of state government that people see. When I attend an event, people see the detail that's with me. I was continuously trying to recruit more to diversify. On one occasion, I met two female troopers who were on duty at an event. Both seemed competent and impressive, and I asked the state police to see if they were interested in joining. I often meet people, men and women, and if they show promise, I refer them to be interviewed. The state police handled the interviewing and the hiring, and one of the two troopers eventually joined the detail. I got to know her over time, and she's a great professional, and I would sometimes banter with her when we were in the car. We spent a lot of time driving around the state. This female trooper was getting married, and I made some jokes about the negative consequences of married life. I meant it to be humorous. She was offended, and she was right.

The trooper also said that in an elevator I touched her back and when I was walking past her in a doorway I touched her stomach. Now I don't recall doing it, but if she said I did it, I believe her. At public events, troopers will often hold doors open or guard the doorways. When I walk past them, I often will give them a grip of the arm, a pat on face, a touch on the stomach, a slap on the back. It's my way of saying, 'I see you. I appreciate you, and I thank you.' I'm not comfortable just walking past and ignoring them. Of course, usually they are male troopers. In this case, I don't remember doing it at all. I didn't do it consciously with the female trooper. I did not mean any sexual connotation. I did not mean any intimacy by it.

I just wasn't thinking. It was totally thoughtless in the literal sense of the word, but it was also insensitive. It was embarrassing to her, and it was disrespectful. It was a mistake, plain and simple. I have no other words to explain it. I want to personally apologize to her and her family. I have the greatest respect for her and for the New York State Police.

Now, obviously, in a highly political matter like this, there are many agendas and there are many motivations at play. If anyone thought otherwise, they would be naive, and New Yorkers are not naive. But I want to thank the women who came forward with sincere complaints. It's not easy to step forward, but you did an important service, and you taught me and you taught others an important lesson: personal boundaries must be expanded and must be protected. I accept full responsibility.

Part of being New York tough is being New York smart. New York smart tells us that this situation and moment are not about the facts. It's not about the truth. It's not about thoughtful analysis. It's not about how do we make the system better. This is about politics, and our political system today is too often driven by the extremes. Rashness has replaced reasonableness. Loudness has replaced soundness. Twitter has become the public square for policy debate. There is an intelligent discussion to be had on gender-based actions on generational and cultural behavioral differences on setting higher standards and finding reasonable resolutions. But the political environment is too hot and it is too reactionary for that now, and it is unfortunate.

Now, you know me. I'm a New Yorker, born and bred. I am a fighter, and my instinct is to fight through this controversy because I truly believe it is politically motivated. I believe it is unfair and it is untruthful, and I believe that it demonizes behavior that is unsustainable for society. If I could communicate the facts through the frenzy, New Yorkers would understand. I believe that, but when I took my oath as governor, then it changed. I became a fighter, but I became a fighter for you, and it is your best interests that I must serve. This situation by its current trajectory will generate months of political and legal controversy. That is what is going to happen. That is how the political wind is blowing. It will consume government. It will cost taxpayers millions of dollars. It will brutalize people.

The State Assembly yesterday outlined weeks of process that will then lead to months of litigation, time and money that government should spend managing Covid, guarding against the Delta variant, reopening upstate, fighting gun violence and saving New York City. All that time would be wasted. This is one of the most challenging times for government in a generation. Government really needs to function today. Government needs to perform. It is a matter of life and death — government operations, and wasting energy on distractions is the last thing that state government should be doing. And I can not be the cause of that.

New York tough means New York loving, and I love New York, and I love you. And everything I have ever done has been motivated by that love. And I would never want to be unhelpful in any way. And I think that given the circumstances, the best way I can help now is if I step aside and let government get back to governing. And, therefore, that's what I'll do because I work for you, and doing the right thing is doing the right thing for you. Because as we say, "It's not about me. It's about we."

Kathy Hochul, my lieutenant governor, is smart and competent. This transition must be seamless. We have a lot going on. I'm very worried about the Delta variant, and so should you be. But she can come up to speed quickly. And my resignation will be effective in 14 days.

To my team: Melissa DeRosa, Robert Mujica, Beth Garvey, Stephanie Benton, Dana Carotenuto, Kelly Cummings, Rich Azzopardi, Howard Zucker, Rick Cotton, Janno Lieber, Jack Davies and the hundreds of dedicated administration officials. I want to say this: Thank you. Thank you. And be proud. We made New York state the progressive capital of the nation. No other state government accomplished more to help people. And that is what it's all about.

Just think about what we did. We passed marriage equality, creating a new civil right. Legalized love for the L.G.B.T.Q. community and we generated a force for change that swept the nation. We passed the SAFE Act years ago, the smartest gun safety law in the United States of America, and it banned the madness of assault weapons. We've saved countless lives with that law. Fifteen dollar minimum wage, the highest minimum wage in the nation, lifting millions of families' standard of living, putting more food on the table and clothes on their backs. And we led the nation in economic justice with that reform. We have managed every emergency mother nature could throw at us: fires, floods, hurricanes, super storms and pandemics.

We balanced the state budget and we got it done on time, more than any other administration because government should work and perform. Free college tuition for struggling families. Nobody in the state will be denied their college dreams because of their income. We have built new airports, rail, transit, roads, all across this state, faster and better than ever before, and more than any state in the nation. The most effective green economy program in the nation. We did more for Black and Latino families than any other administration. We did more for working families. We did more for our union brothers and sisters. We did more to battle racism and anti-Semitism.

Today so much of the politics is just noise, just static, and that's why people tune it out. What matters is actually improving people's lives, and that's what you did. You made this state a better state for the generations that follow, and that is undeniable, inarguable and true, even

in these ugly, crazy times.

I thank Speaker Carl Heastie and Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for their leadership. And let me say this on a personal note. In many ways, I see the world through the eyes of my daughters, Cara, Mariah and Michaela. They are 26 and 26, twins, and 23. And I have lived this experience with and through them. I have sat on the couch with them, hearing the ugly accusations for weeks. I've seen the look in their eyes, and the expression on their faces, and it hurt. I want my three jewels to know this. My greatest goal is for them to have a better future than the generations of women before them.

It is still in many ways a man's world. It always has been. We have sexism that is culturalized and institutionalized. My daughters have more talent and natural gifts than I ever had. I want to make sure that society allows them to fly as high as their wings will carry them. There should be no assumptions, no stereotypes, no limitations. I want them to know from the bottom of my heart that I never did and I never would intentionally disrespect a woman or treat any woman differently than I would want them treated. And that is the God's honest truth. Your dad made mistakes, and he apologized, and he learned from it. And that's what life is all about.

And I know the political process is flawed. And I understand their cynicism and distrust and disappointment now. But don't give it up. Because government is still the best vehicle for making positive social change.

Lastly, I want to remind all New Yorkers of an important lesson and one that I will carry with me for the rest of my life, and that's what you New Yorkers did in battling Covid. The enemy landed in New York State. Covid launched the attack here. It came on planes from Europe, and we had no idea. It was an ambush. And it was up to New Yorkers to fight back. We were on our own, and it was war.

Nurses, doctors, essential workers became our front line heroes. Hospitals became the battlegrounds. Streets were still, and sirens filled the city's silence. Trailers carried the bodies of our fallen brothers and sisters. But you refused to give up, and you fought back, and you won, going from the highest infection rate in the nation to one of the lowest. No one thought we could do it. But you did it. You led the nation, and you showed the way forward. And how you did it is what's most important. You did it together, not as Black New Yorkers or white New Yorkers, not as L.G.B.T.Q. New Yorkers or straight New Yorkers, or Democrats or Republicans, or upstate or downstate, or Jewish, Muslim, Protestant or Catholic New Yorkers, but as one community, one family, the family of New York. You overcame the naysayers and the haters and the fear and the division. And you unified, and you rose and you overcame.

And you saved lives. And that was powerful in its effect. It was beautiful to see. And it was an honor to lead. Please remember that lesson. Hold it dear and hold it up high for this nation to see because it is New York State at her finest, creating her legacy, fulfilling her destiny, giving life an animation to the lady in the harbor, saying “excelsior we can be better. We can reach higher.” And proclaiming, E Pluribus Unum. Out of many one. unity, community, love. That is our founding premise, and our enduring promise. And that is the salvation of this nation that it so desperately needs to hear. Thank you for the honor of serving you. It has been the honor of my lifetime. God bless you.